



***Rush  
Line***

**B R T**

April 8, 2019

# COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## MEETING #4

## Agenda

1. Welcome and introductions.
2. Project updates.
3. Environmental Assessment.
4. Station design.



# Section 106 (Cultural and Historic Resources)

## Section 106 Overview



Ramaley House (Source: Katie Ohland)

- Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 requires federal agencies to evaluate impact of federally funded projects on historic properties to determine potential effects.
- An historic property is one that is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, based on:
  - Association with a historically significant event.
  - Association with the lives of significant persons.
  - Design/construction.
  - Potential to yield important historical or prehistorical information.



## Section 106

- Purpose: To identify historic properties, assess potential adverse effects to these properties and establish measures to mitigate or avoid these effects.
- Process.
  - Identify study area for architecture and archaeology.
  - Phase I analysis – inventory.
  - Phase II analysis – more detailed analysis.
  - Refine area of potential effect.
  - Assess effects.
  - Identify mitigation, as needed.



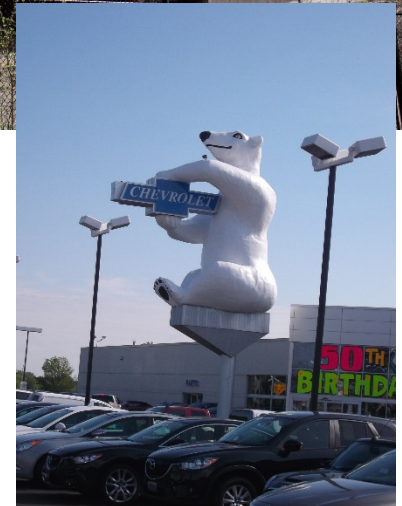
Source: Maplewood Area Historical Society

## Architectural Investigations to Date

- Around 700 properties reviewed to date.
- 15 resources identified for Phase II study.
  - Structures, complexes, districts, road and rail segments.
  - Associated with significant events, persons, styles or methods, and/or may yield important historical information.



Source: streets.mn



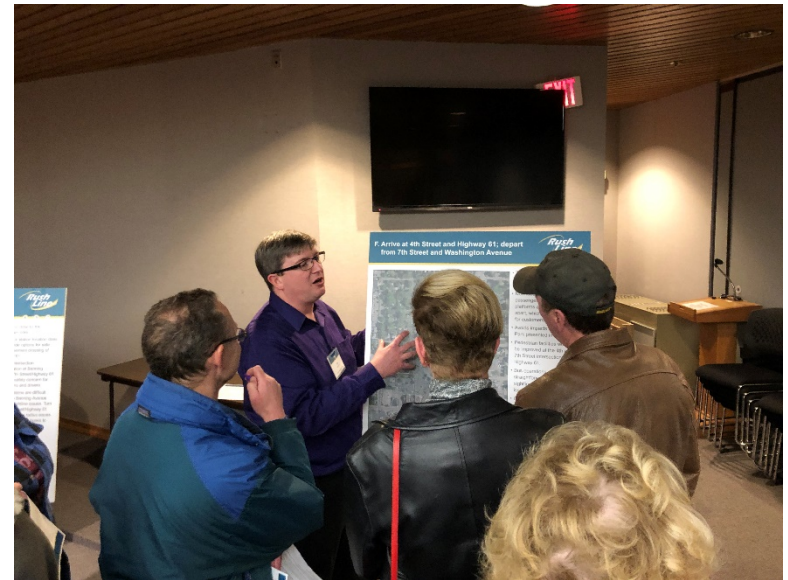
Source: White Bear Lake Magazine



# Downtown White Bear Lake Station

## Station Location Public Engagement

- January 4: Pop-up at White Bear Lake library.
- January 8: Pop-up at White Bear Area YMCA.
- January 10: Open house at White Bear Lake City Hall.
- January 9-31: Online survey.
- February 12: White Bear Lake City Council meeting.
- February 26: White Bear Lake City Council meeting.

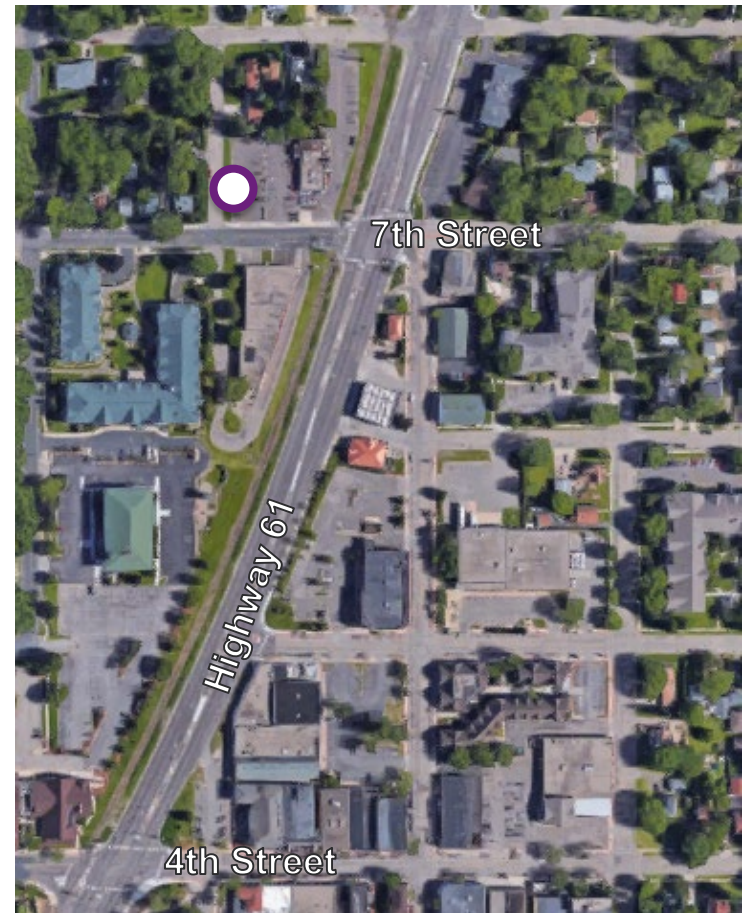


Rush Line BRT Project Open House, January 10



## Station Location Update

- Evaluated six station location options based on:
  - Station accessibility.
  - Proximity to high-intensity development.
  - Efficient transit operations.
  - Minimize traffic impacts.
  - Minimize property impacts.
  - Public input.
- White Bear Lake City Council approved recommendation to advance 7th Street and Washington Avenue option on February 26.



Downtown White Bear Lake station location

## February 28 Policy Advisory Committee Meeting

- Confirmed the downtown White Bear Lake station location based on recommendation from Technical Advisory Committee and City of White Bear Lake.



Policy Advisory Committee, September 27

## February 28 Policy Advisory Committee Meeting

- Confirmed recommendations from peer review:
  - Eliminate mixed traffic option on Jackson Street.
  - Eliminate single lane guideway under Forest Street bridge.
  - Shift trail configuration change from Arlington Avenue to Larpenteur Avenue.
  - Use parallel platform configuration at Larpenteur Avenue and Frost Avenue stations.
  - Eliminate BNSF right-of-way option north of I-694.

## Guideway Configurations

- Dedicated right-of-way: buses have an exclusive lane with limited or no access for private cars.
  - Outside-running: dedicated bus lanes are located outside car travel lanes.
  - Center-running: dedicated bus lanes are in the center of the road with car travel lanes on either side.
  - Dedicated guideway: buses operate in lanes separate from a road.
  - Business access and transit (BAT): buses have a dedicated lane that private cars can use to turn right.
- Mixed traffic: buses and private cars operate in the same lane.

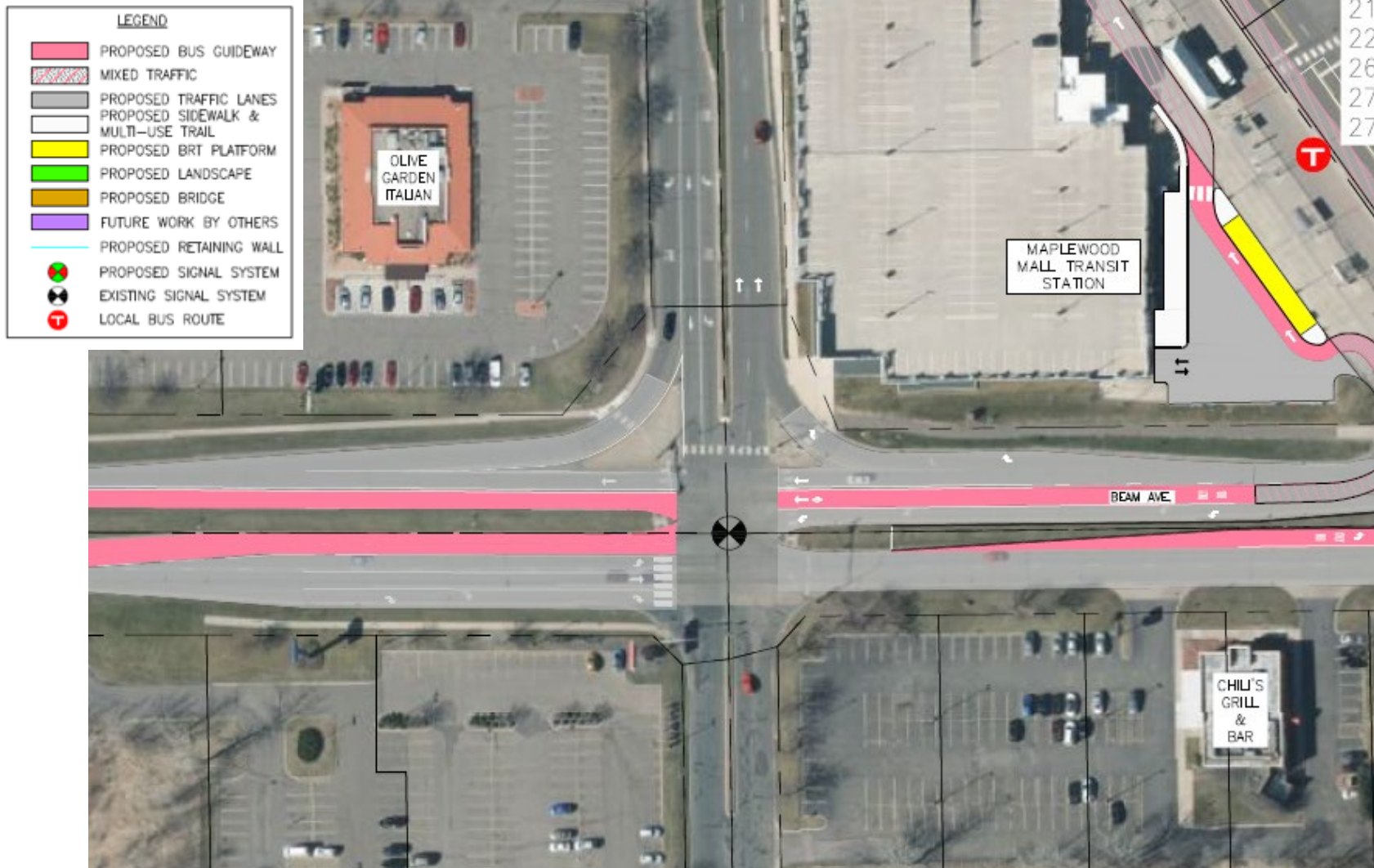


# Outside Running



# Center Running

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# Dedicated Guideway

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# Business Access and Transit





# Mixed Traffic



## Recent Public Engagement Activities

- January 22 and 23: Pop-up at St. John's Hospital.
- January 23: Update to District 5 Payne-Phalen Planning Council.
- February 2: Winter Carnival Family Day.
- February: Hmong Village survey.



Winter Carnival Family Day, February 2



## Recent Public Engagement Activities



Hamm's Area Business Engagement, March 26

- March 6: Presentation at Pedro Park Open House
- March 26: Hamm's area business engagement meeting.
- March 27: Ramsey County Rail Right-of-Way Visioning Workshop.
- April 7: Northeast Metro Community Expo.
- Ongoing interactive map.

## Hamm's Area Business Engagement

- Organized in collaboration with ESABA and Everest LLC.
- 8 people representing different businesses attended.
- Key takeaways:
  - Overall support for improved transit in the area and recognition that many workers in the area use transit to get to work.
  - Strong interest in improving biking and walking connections to Rush Line BRT stations and general connectivity within the neighborhood.



Hamm's Area Business Engagement, March 26

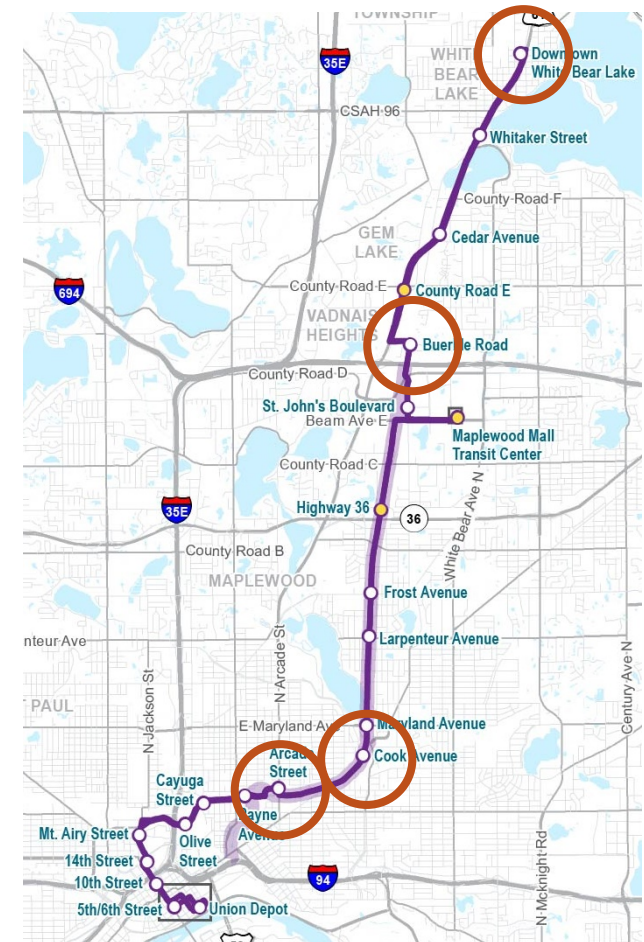


## Public Engagement Themes

- Hmong Village:
  - 250 surveys distributed; 25 returned.
  - Most business owners drive, often because they are unaware of public transit options, and few of them know if their employees or customers take transit.
  - It may be beneficial to do an educational/awareness campaign in Hmong Village about nearby transit options.
  - A customer/employee survey may be of benefit to learn more about travel patterns of other people regularly traveling to Hmong Village.
- St. John's Hospital:
  - Support for improved transit service to the hospital among staff.

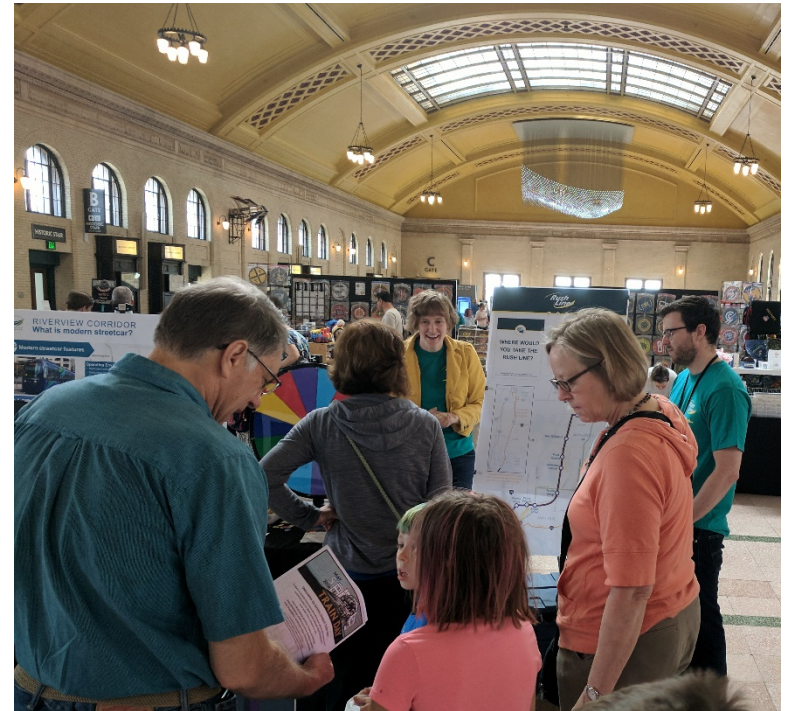
## Ongoing Public Engagement

- Examples of changes made in response to input:
  - Station locations for Arcade Street and Downtown White Bear Lake.
  - Addition of Cook Avenue and Buerkle Road stations.
- Upcoming opportunities for input:
  - Design in the Ramsey County rail right-of-way.
  - Bicycle and pedestrian safety.
  - Station design.



## Upcoming Public Engagement

- Focus areas:
  - Highway 36 station area business.
  - Downtown Saint Paul.
  - Ramsey County rail right-of-way.
  - Weaver Elementary School.
- Attendance at community events throughout the corridor during the spring and summer.



Union Depot Train Day, May 5, 2018

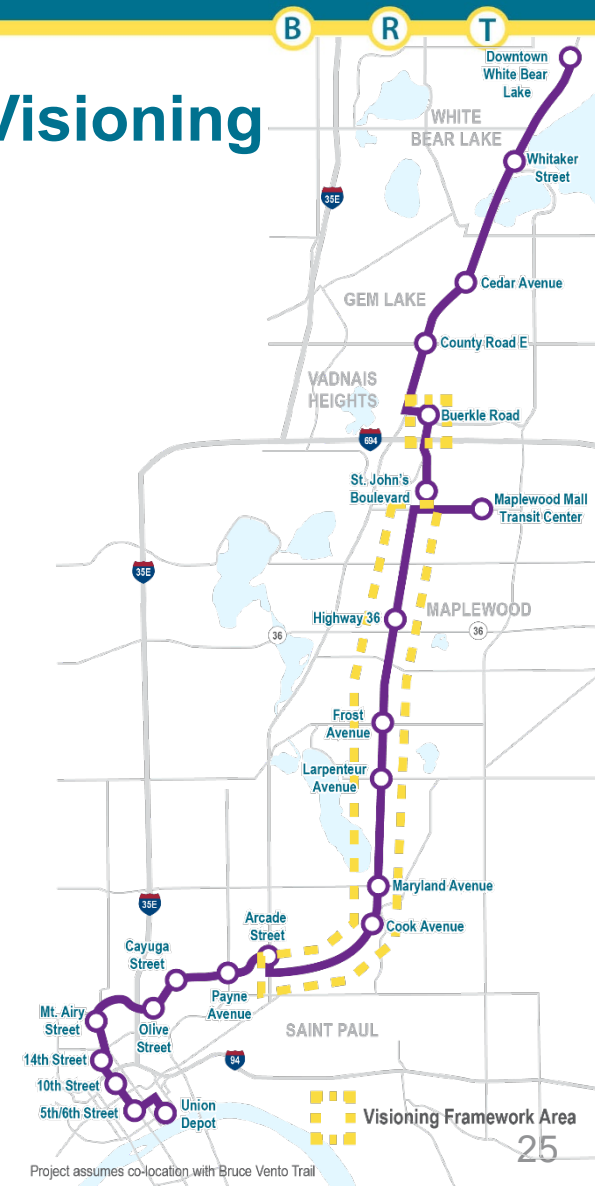
## Scheduled Public Engagement Activities

- April 9: Update to CapitolRiver Council Development Review Committee.
- April 13: Pop-up at Saint Paul Farmers' Market.
- April 26: Weaver Elementary School Carnival.
- May 5: West Side Cinco de Mayo Celebration.
- May 7: Weaver Elementary Parent Information Night.
- May 14: Maplewood Bike Rodeo.
- June 1: WaterFest at Phalen Regional Park.
- June 1-2: Union Depot Train Day.



# Ramsey County Rail Right-of-Way Visioning Framework Workshop

- Key questions addressed:
  - What is important?
  - What is the vision for the Ramsey County rail right-of-way?
  - What are potential design solutions?
- Interactive workshop.
  - Table exercise reviewing and discussing dedicated BRT and Bruce Vento Trail co-location.
  - Design preference exercise.



## Ramsey County Rail Right-of-Way Visioning Framework Workshop

- Design elements considered.
  - Trail/BRT separation.
  - Grade separation.
  - Landscaping.
  - Stormwater treatment.
  - Fencing.
  - Buffer/screening.
  - Trail lighting.
  - Wayfinding/signage.
  - Trailhead/amenities.



# Ramsey County Rail Right-of-Way Visioning Framework Workshop

- Major takeaways:
  - Maintenance is a common concern.
  - Context is important – look to residents and adjacent property owners for additional guidance.
  - This is an opportunity to showcase the historic nature of the rail corridor.
  - There is a preference towards maximizing green space and natural features.
  - There is a desire to maximize permeability and pedestrian access to and across the corridor.
  - Safety and wayfinding continue to be areas of importance.



Visioning Framework Workshop, March 27

# Ramsey County Rail Right-of-Way Visioning Framework Schedule



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# Environmental Assessment

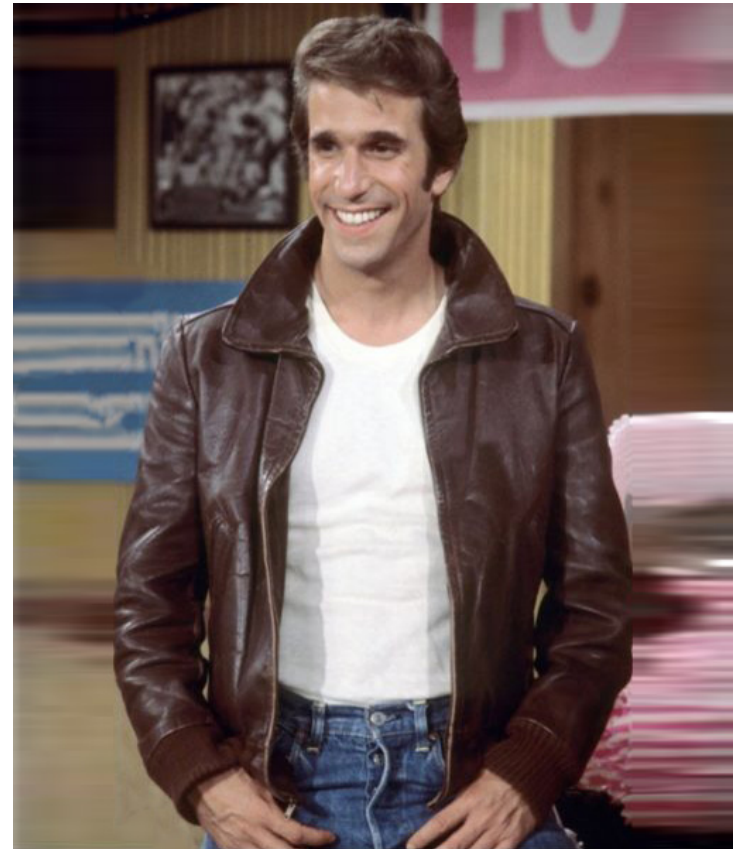
## National Environmental Policy Act

- National Environmental Policy Act of 1970 requires federal agencies to evaluate the environmental effects of their actions.
- Because Rush Line BRT intends to pursue federal funding, an environmental document must be completed for the project.



## Levels of Environmental Analysis

- Categorical Exclusion.
- Environmental Assessment, followed by:
  - Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), or
  - Environmental Impact Statement.



Pictured: Fonzie, not FONSI.



## Environmental Assessment: Purpose

- Provides evidence and analysis for whether an Environmental Impact Statement or Finding of No Significant Impact is required.
- Aids in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act when an Environmental Impact Statement is not necessary.
- Facilitates preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement if one is needed.

## Environmental Assessment Contents



Maplewood Mall Transit Center (City of Maplewood)

- The purpose and need for the Rush Line BRT Project.
- A written and visual description of the transit alternatives (routes, modes of transit) considered.
- The short- and long-term environmental, social, cultural and transportation-related impacts of each alternative.
- A listing of agencies and people consulted.

## Environmental Impact Areas

- Transportation.
  - Transit.
  - Traffic.
  - Pedestrians and bicycles.
  - Parking, driveways and loading zones.
- Land use plan compatibility.
- Neighborhoods and community resources.
- Land acquisitions and relocations.
- Economics.
- Cultural resources.
- Environmental justice.
- Safety and security.



Mears Park, Saint Paul (Nick Peters | Fine Art America)



## Schedule and Update

- Technical reports under development.
  - Lay the groundwork for the Environmental Assessment.
  - Topics include traffic, noise, air and water quality, land use and visual resources.
  - No noise impacts are anticipated.
- Environmental Assessment expected to be released for public comment in fall 2020 with environmental decision in spring 2021.

## Discussion

- Do you have any questions about the National Environmental Policy Act or the Environmental Assessment process for Rush Line?
- What, if any, environmental impacts are you concerned the project might have?



# Station Design



## Overview

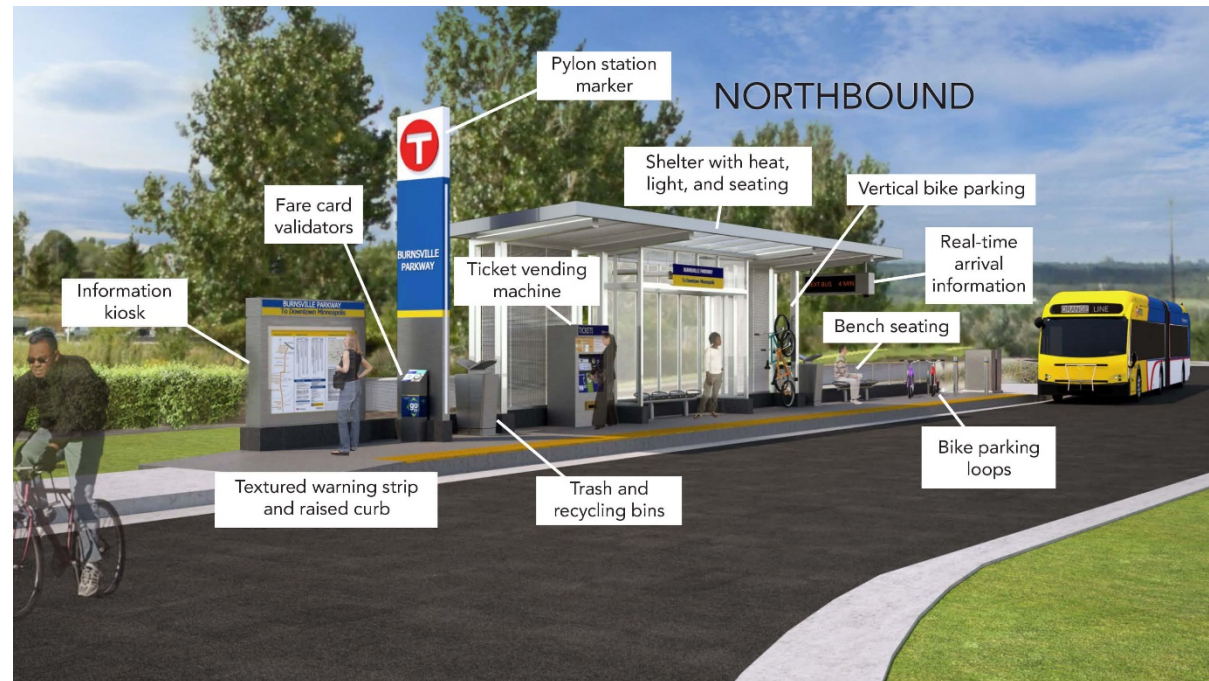
- Platform size and location are determined during environmental analysis phase.
- Several standard features are included at every station.
- Station design and additional amenities may vary from station to station based on community input, surrounding physical environment, etc.
- Station design is further refined in project development and final engineering phases.

### FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION PROCESS



## Standard Features

- NexTrip real-time departure signs.
- Raised platforms.
- Maps.
- Benches.
- Heat.
- Lighting.
- Bike racks.
- Trash and recycling bins.
- Ticket machines.



METRO Orange Line BRT I-35W & Burnsville Parkway station

## Elements to Consider in Station Design

- Safety and security.
- Design and aesthetics.
- Additional station amenities.
- Sidewalk and trail connections to station.
- Accessible connections and station amenities for people with disabilities and/or mobility devices, strollers, carts, etc.
- Cohesive station design with the surrounding community and, if present, historic resources.



Source: Transit Street Design Guide (NACTO)



## Potential Added Amenities



“Falling Leaves” station design, Portland, Oregon (Photo courtesy of TriMet)

- Designated vehicle drop-off and pick-up zone.
- Bicycle lockers.
- Bicycle tune-up station.
- Wayfinding signage to local institutions and attractions.
- Landscaping and greenery.
- Public art.
- WiFi hotspot.
- USB charging port or outlet.
- Design features: specific theme, architectural style, building materials, colors, etc.

## Discussion

- How should standard station features be configured?
- What station amenities (fix-it stations, public art, etc.) are most important to you?
- Which elements (safety, aesthetics, etc.) are most important to consider in station design?
- If you could design a Rush Line BRT station, what would it look like? If you designed it to reflect your community, what design features would you use?

## Next Meeting

- A Doodle poll will be distributed for the next Community Advisory Committee in the summer.
- Contact the co-chairs and Frank if you have ideas for future agenda items.



Thank you!



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